

SPECIFICATION

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PUGILIST CORNER MAT SYSTEM

Background of Invention

- [0001] This invention relates to a boxing ring configuration, boxing method and pugilist corner mat, and more particularly to the same wherein an absorbent mat is used under the seat of a pugilist to collect fluids that would otherwise deposit on the boxing ring floor while the pugilist is being tended to during a rest period between rounds of the contest.
- [0002] Boxing matches conducted in a boxing ring are typically conducted in a number of timed rounds. Between each round, the pugilists are retired to their respective corners for a timed rest period. During the rest period, each pugilist is seated on a chair or stool and administered to by the trainer, medical technician, physician, their assistants and/or other support personnel. Water or other rehydration fluids may be spilled onto the floor adjacent the pugilist, together with ice, sweat, blood, or the like. Frequently, there is so much fluid deposited in a pugilist corner during a rest period that the floor may become slippery and/or the contest must be delayed or interrupted to mop up excessive fluids. Furthermore, the fluids may stain or discolor the floor.
- [0003] Boxing matches present an opportunity for the display of sponsor and/or participant trademarks. Thus, trademarks may be displayed on the pugilist's clothing and equipment, for example. Unfortunately, other opportunities for visual sponsorship acknowledgement in the vicinity of the ring are rather limited. For example, trademarks cannot be displayed in such a manner as to block the view of the spectators who have paid to see the contest, or the view of the television or video cameras. Moreover, the trademark displays can be semi-permanent in character, making it difficult to remove or change the trademark displays for one fight, but not for other fights at the same event. Therefore, there exists a need for a way to expand the opportunities for displaying trademarks of participants and sponsors at a boxing match, and to improve the flexibility

in the different types and manner of trademark displays.

- [0004] Similarly, there is a considerable market for contest collectors items or paraphernalia associated with the fight and/or event. After-fight marketing of such items can be a major source of revenue for the pugilists and/or event promoters, particularly in championship and champion-caliber fights. There is therefore a need to expand the number of collectors items associated with a particular contest.

Summary of Invention

- [0005] The present invention involves an absorbent, lay-flat mat that can be positioned under the seat of the pugilist while he is being administered to between rounds. The mat catches any fluids that would otherwise be deposited, and thus keeps the floor from becoming slippery or stained. The mat can also display a trademark on an obverse surface. The mat is put in place at the end of a round, and removed at the start of the next round so as not to get in the way of the pugilists. A new mat can be used for each round, or the mat can be re-used.

- [0006] Broadly, the present invention provides, in one aspect, a boxing ring configuration useful for administering to pugilists between rounds essentially free of fluid deposition upon a floor of the boxing ring. The configuration includes a boxing ring having posts rising upwardly from the floor at corners thereof. Opposing corners are designated as pugilist corners. An absorbent mat is removably disposed in a pugilist corner adjacent to a respective post so as to overlies the floor at the corner. A seat for a pugilist is placed on a central area of the mat so as to leave an apron area of the mat disposed outwardly of the central area for catching fluids from administering to the pugilist when seated on the seat. The mat is thus secured in place against the floor by the weight of the pugilist on the seat.

- [0007] Preferably, a trademark is displayed on an obverse side of the mat. The trademark can be displayed on the apron area. A printable area can be provided on the mat for recording pugilist data, for example on a reverse side of the mat or in the central area on the obverse side. A cutout for the post can be formed in a corner of the mat. First and second edges of the mat preferably extend from the cutout substantially at a right angle for alignment with respective edges of the floor. A preferably arcuate edge of the mat can extend between ends of the first and second edges of the mat opposite the cutout. The

mat preferably comprises an upper absorbent layer and a lower absorbent layer on either side of an impervious layer.

[0008] In another aspect, the invention provides a method for conducting a contest between pugilists in a boxing ring that has a floor, posts extending upwardly from the floor at corner areas thereof, and ropes strung from the posts adjacent to a perimeter of the floor. The method includes the sequential steps of: (a) commencing a round of the contest between the pugilists in the boxing ring; (b) terminating the round and commencing a rest period; (c) placing a flat, absorbent mat in a rest corner assigned to a respective pugilist; (d) placing a seat for the pugilist upon the mat so as to leave an apron area around at least one side of the seat; (e) seating the pugilist on the seat; (f) administering to the pugilist during the rest period and catching excess fluids on the mat, thereby inhibiting fluid accumulation on the floor; (g) removing the seat and mat from the boxing ring in preparation for another round; and (h) optionally repeating steps (a) through (g) a plurality of times.

[0009] Preferably, step (c) includes displaying a trademark on an obverse side of the mat. The trademark can be disposed in the apron area. The same mat can be used in successive steps (c), or a new mat is used in successive steps (c). The method can also include the step of recording contest data on the mat. The contest data can include a signature of the pugilist. The method preferably allows the contest to be essentially free of interruption for mopping excess fluids from the floor.

[0010] In a further aspect, the present invention provides a lay-flat mat for use under the seat of a pugilist being administered to during a rest period between rounds of a boxing match. The mat has an upper absorbent layer with an obverse surface, a lower absorbent layer with a reverse surface, an intermediate impervious layer, a cutout at a corner for receiving a post at a corner of a boxing ring, first and second edges at a right angle and extending away from the cutout for alignment with respective edges of a floor of the boxing ring, a third edge opposite the cutout and extending from respective ends of the first and second edges, a central region of the obverse surface adjacent the cutout for receiving a seat for the pugilist, an apron area between the third edge and the central region, and a trademark displayed on the obverse surface.

[0011] Preferably, the trademark is disposed in the apron area. The mat can also include a

printable area in the central region or on the reverse surface for recording match data. The mat preferably includes match data recorded in the printable area, preferably a pugilist signature. The upper layer can be stained with body fluid from the pugilist.

Brief Description of Drawings

[0012] Fig. 1 shows a perspective view of a boxing ring with a mat and stool placed in a pugilist corner for use by the pugilist according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0013] Fig. 2 is an enlarged plan of the mat shown in Fig. 1.

[0014] Fig. 3 is a cross section of the mat as seen along the lines 3-3 of Fig. 2.

Detailed Description

[0015] With reference to the figures wherein like reference numerals represent like parts, Fig. 1 shows a conventional boxing ring 100 that includes a floor 102, posts 104 rising upwardly adjacent respective corners 106 and ropes 108 carried by the posts 104 to circumscribe the contest area, as is well known in the art. In the opposing pugilist rest corners 110, an inventive mat 112 is shown positioned over the floor 102 and under a seat 114.

[0016] Fig. 2 shows the mat 112 in larger detail. The mat 112 includes a cutout 116 at one corner for accommodating the post 104, for example, a 12-inch radius arc. First and second edges 118, 120 extend from the cutout 116 at a right angle to align with corresponding edges of the floor 102. A preferably curved outer edge 122 extends between the opposite ends of the edges 118, 120. The seat 114 is placed on the central area 124 so that an apron area 126 lies between the central area 124 and the outer edge 122. Since the ropes 108 are disposed inwardly from the post 104 and the edges of the floor 114, the seat 114 is likewise positioned at an offset so that the pugilist can sit upon the seat 114 and optionally lean against the ropes 108 or use the ropes 108 as a seat back. The spacing of the seat 114 from the edges 118, 120 forms a secondary apron area 128 between the seat 114 and the edges 118, 120.

[0017] The apron area 126 should be sufficiently large so as to substantially catch any water or ice that may be spilled, or any sweat or blood that may fall from the pugilist. Ideally, the apron area 126 should be wide enough for the pugilist to place his shoes entirely

thereon. On the other hand, the mat 112 should not be so large as to make deployment inconvenient or unwieldy. For example, a mat 112 wherein the outer edge 122 has a radius of 5 feet is preferred.

[0018] A trademark 130 is displayed on the obverse surface of the mat 112, preferably in the apron area 126 so that the pugilist and/or those administering to the pugilist do not obstruct it. As used herein, a trademark is any distinctive or famous device or symbol that can be printed on the mat 112, and can be either a mark federally registered under the provisions of the Lanham Act, 17 U.S.C. § 1051 *et seq.*, or a common law mark, and also includes service marks, collective marks and the like. Trademarks of the pugilist, the event promoter, event sponsors, media, media sponsors, or the like are some examples of trademarks that can be displayed on the mat 112.

[0019] A printable appliqué 131 is secured to a surface of the mat 112, preferably in the central area 124, or on the reverse surface of the mat 112, so as to minimize the amount of fluid that deposits thereon. The appliqué 131 is preferably water-resistant paper or a similar material, and can be sewn or glued onto the mat 112. The appliqué 131 can be written upon to record fight data, e.g. pugilist, opponent, date, location, round number, etc., either pre-printed before the contest or printed after the round in which it is used. In a particularly preferred embodiment, the appliqué 131 includes the signature of the pugilist and/or his trainer, manager, assistants and the like.

[0020]

Fig. 3 shows a cross section of a preferred embodiment of the mat 112 having a central backing layer 132 and upper and lower absorbent layers 134, 136 glued or otherwise adhered thereto. The backing layer 132 can be a plastic sheet or film, such as, for example, high or low density polyethylene, polypropylene, or paper or the like. The layer 132 should inhibit fluids from passing, i.e. it is essentially impervious to water. The absorbent layers 134, 136 can be any absorbent fiber such as cellulose and/or an absorbent gel such as polyacrylamide, for example, materials commonly employed for fluid absorption in disposable diapers or sanitary napkins. The mat 112 can optionally include outer layers 138, 140 that are porous, for example, woven or non-woven polypropylene fabric that facilitates the passage of liquid into the respective absorbent layers 134, 136, e.g. by a wicking action. In this manner, the trademark 130 can be printed on the outer layers 138, 140 in a conventional manner. The outer layers 138, 140

can be of a light or dark color so that staining is respectively more visible or less visible, as desired.

[0021] In use, the contest is begun with a cleared floor 102 and an adequate supply of the mats 112 on hand. For example, if the contest is scheduled for 12 rounds, then eleven or twelve of the mats 112, depending on whether or not it is expected that the pugilist will be administered to in a corner 110 after the final round, can be packaged in a bundle, including preprinted trademark 130 and contest data on the appliqué 131. At the conclusion of each round, a mat 112 is placed in the corner 110 with the trademark 130 on the upper surface, the seat 114 is placed on the mat 112, and the pugilist is seated and administered to. Any fluids that fall from the pugilist are collected on the mat 112 and absorbed so as to keep the floor 102 dry.

[0022] At the conclusion of the rest period, the pugilist arises, and the seat 114 and mat 112 are quickly removed. It is not necessary to mop up any fluids from the corner 110 as any fluids that would have otherwise collected are caught and absorbed by the mat 112, and so there is no delay or interruption of the contest. The mat 112 can then be modified to record any pertinent contest data on the appliqué 131. Following the conclusion of the next round, the mat 112 from the previous round can be re-used, depending on how much fluid it has absorbed, either in the same orientation or by turning the mat 112 over to use the former reverse surface as the obverse surface. If desired, a new mat 112 can be used for each rest period to maximize contest memorabilia.

[0023] The invention is described above in exemplary terms that are not intended to limit the invention. Many modifications and changes will become apparent to those skilled in the art in view of the foregoing disclosure. It is intended that all such modifications and changes within the scope and spirit of the appended claims shall be embraced thereby.